

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 1, replace lines 2-5 with the following:

This application claims the benefit of European Patent Applications No. 00 102 348.0, filed February 2, 2000, and No. 00 107 134.9, filed April 7, 2000. The disclosures of these applications are hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety.

The paragraph bridging pages 1 and 2, beginning line 16, please amend as follows:

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Conventionally, a photographer photographs pictures (images) by means of a camera. In this way he captures image information and stores the image information on a suitable storing medium, e.g. on a film in conventional cameras or on a digital memory device (e.g. floppy disk) in digital cameras. The photographer then brings the storage medium (e.g. film) to a photo shop (peripheral organisation). At a photo shop the storing mediums (e.g. films in film cartridges, electronic memory units of digital cameras, etc.) of several customers are collected and processing information are added concerning the particular processing wishes of the customers (e.g. the form of the photographic prints, type of photographic paper, number of prints per picture (image), adding of a CD with digitalised pictures etc.). Furthermore, the name of the customer is noted and usually an individual order number is assigned to a so-called order or customer order which comprises, for example, a work envelope with an inserted film cartridge and the working instructions or processing information. Moreover, the photo shop may add particular requests to the processing information, e.g. the request to add one or more particular promotions to the work envelope at the photographic laboratory. In this way, a plurality of "customer orders" are collected at end of the photo shops.

The paragraph bridging pages 2 and 3, beginning at line 8, please amend as follows:

A plurality of photo shops exist, each of which collect a plurality of customer orders. Each photo shop forwards the customer orders to a photographic laboratory (centralised organisation). At this photographic laboratory, each order is processed by processing the customer order (e.g. film) of tile order according to the processing information (e.g. notes, bar codes, etc..) of the order. For instance, in the prior art (see EP 0 952 487, the disclosure of which is hereby incorporated by reference), a photographic laboratory executes the following processes on a customer order:

- receiving the customer order comprising e.g. the work envelope of the photo shop and the film cartridge within the work envelope, and processing information, said order including e.g. notes which describe the processes to be performed with the film negatives of the customer order, transport and customer address etc.;
- removing the film cartridge from the work envelope;
- pulling the exposed film out of its enclosure in the cartridge;
- marking the work envelope and the exposed film by a suitable work code (e.g. bar code or the like);
- joining together the films of different customer order's thus marked to provide a film negative batch;
- developing the batch of films which have been joined together, thus obtaining hatch of negatives, wherein different portions of said batch belong to different customer orders and thus to different processing information;
- printing the successive photographs disposed in the batch on a web of photo graphic paper, different portions of said hatch belonging to different customer orders;

- distinguishing between the prints of each customer order by applying a work code (e.g. bar code) to the prints, which refers to the corresponding negatives;
- cutting the negatives of each customer order into film sections, those film sections including a number of images, according to the number of photographs determined in the processing information belonging to the same customer order;
- cutting the prints of each customer order, one by one, from the web of prints and stacking them so as to form the stack of prints associated with this customer order;
- inserting sections of negatives and the stack of prints assigned to the same customer order into an appropriate flexible pocket-type envelope (a wallet);
- adding any supplements like promotion coupons, mini-albums, floppy disks, CDs etc, assigned to the customer order, to the pocket-type envelope or wallet as signed to the same customer order;
- closing the pocket-type envelope and placing it in the work envelope (assigned to the same customer order);
- closing the work envelope and applying a price label which corresponds to the customer order treated;
- sending the work envelope and thus the processed customer order back to the shop from which it was dispatched, for delivery to the customer.

The paragraph bridging pages 3 and 4, beginning at line 26, please amend as follows:

A photographic laboratory, in general, serves a wide area with a large number of photo shops and, therefore, must be fitted out for processing (handling) a large number of orders (up to ten thousands various orders a day). This has been made possible

only by a high degree of automation in the laboratory itself, with a consistent necessity to standardise the components used (print format, envelopes etc.). A drawback of this standardisation is that individual wishes or information of the customer may not be fulfilled. On the other hand, if a photographic laboratory is designed to fulfil a variety of wishes of a customer, i e. a variety of processing information, the photo graphic laboratory must have a huge number of different processing devices which have to perform the individual orders automatically. Since, however, some individual orders are only rarely desired, the particular processing devices assigned to performing the processes according to those individual wishes or instructions, are only rarely used and therefore not profitable Furthermore, the individual wishes of customers can change due to a change of fashion.

Please delete the following paragraph, beginning at line 20, as follows:

~~The above stated object is solved by the subject matter of the independent claims.~~

~~The dependent claims are directed to advantageous embodiments.~~

The paragraph bridging pages 9 and 10, beginning at line 18, please amend as follows:

If, for example, the processing information comprises automatically processable instructions concerning the formats of the prints and thus the cutting of the web of prints, but also comprises particular instructions concerning the addition of supplements to customer orders, a huge part of the order may be processed automatically. The prints may be processed and cut in the desired formats the cut prints and the corresponding section of Film may be supplied to a pallet assigned to the order and conveyed on a conveyer. Furthermore, a supplement may be added to another tray of the pallet. However, if the pallet arrives at the packing machine (which is also part of the processing system), the packing machine is not able to pack the supplement automatically in a envelope. The processing system of the present invention solves this problem since the processing system checks the information or instructions and recognizes that the adding of a supplement results in that the packing machine is not capable of automatically packing all parts of the customer order into an envelope. The processing system identifies the customer order which comprises for instance at this stage of processing a pallet, the prints, the film section

and the supplement. This identification allows for a different treatment of the identified customer order. For instance, the identified pallet may be conveyed to a packing site where the film, the prints and the supplement are packed into a suitable envelope by an operator. After packing the package (envelope), the package is ~~refed~~ re fed to the automatic processing line which conveys the packages (envelopes) to a shipping station. Furthermore, the (empty) pallet is separated from the customer order and ~~refed~~ re fed to a conveyor belt for reuse in the processing system, i.e. the pallet may be refilled by other prints, films and supplements of a different customer order. A processing system of the present invention may comprise a processing line, where a number of processes is performed on the customer order in a sequence. The "automatic part" of said processing line, i.e. the automatic processing line, comprises devices which automatically process the customer order.

Page 12, lines 29 and 30. please amend as follows:

~~In the following, preferred embodiments of the present invention are described.~~

~~Particular features of the different embodiments may be combined.~~

Other objects and advantages of the present invention will become more apparent from the following detailed description of preferred embodiments, when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings wherein like elements have been represented by like reference numerals and wherein:

Page 24, after line 8, insert the following new paragraph:

It will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that the present invention can be embodied in other specific forms without departing from the spirit or essential characteristics thereof. The presently disclosed embodiments are therefore considered in all respects to be illustrative and not restricted. The scope of the invention is indicated by the

appended claims rather than the foregoing description and all changes that come within the meaning and range and equivalence thereof are intended to be embraced therein.